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Liberty

NOT THE DAUGHTER BUT THE MOTHER OF ORDER — PROUDHON

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"For always in thine eyes, O Liberty!
Shines that high light whereby the world is saved;
And though thou slay us, we will trust in thee."

JOHN HAY.

A Mighty Consultation and a Multitude of Diagnoses.

REPORTED BY A JUNIOR STUDENT.

The patient lay on the operating table in the theatre of the greatest surgical hospital on earth. The Faculty of every known school, seminary, college, and system of medical science was represented on that floor. Leeches in embryo filled the vast galleries, in a remote corner of which sat your humble servant, alongside his friend Publius, a retired physician of wide experience and renown. So vast was his knowledge that not one amid that wise array but Publius could tell his attainments, estimate the depth of his learning, and measure the extent of his fame.

This Publius was a sort of an out relation of mine, an uncle by marriage or by divorce or other mishap; the connecting link it will, however, be needless here to trace; and had come with me on this expedition at much trouble and expense, not to speak of the long and exhausting journey (considering his great age), so that I might have the inestimable advantage of his immense knowledge of medical lore and exegetical skill, and thus fail not to profit by what I should see and hear during the progress of this unique and never-to-be-forgotten congress, council, convention, or consultation of the votaries of the art and science of body-mending from the four quarters of the globe.

The subject, as already stated, lay on the table in a comatose condition. But whether he was really a sufferer from any known disease, or merely shamming; or if the complaint were chronic, intermittent, or ephemeral; whether a complete cure were possible or temporary relief only could be afforded, and indeed if any treatment at all should be applied, — these were questions both hotly and long debated by the *savants*, the pith of which will in due course be faithfully set down.

The purpose of the controversy appeared to be not so much to attempt an immediate cure of the patient as to make of him an example and illustration of theories and principles capable of a more general application. For, as it turned out, the malady was of a persistent and universal character. So that the central object of the gathering — the patient, to wit — was of minor consequence compared with its ultimate aim. But, as the story-makers say, we are anticipating.

Around the "case" were many groups, most of them seeming to study the symptoms with much show of earnestness. At a distance from these, beyond the raised end of the table, which was tilted slightly, I could see a mighty hubbub going on and a lot of people of great eminence bustling about a large voltaic battery, from which a number of wires proceeded toward the operating table and were lost in different parts of the patient's body.

The battery was a composite one, consisting of many cells and groups of cells, from each of which separate currents were made to pass along the wires. At each of these stood one or more notable personages, adding the acids and regulating the metallic plates which maintained the current, while an equal number did nothing but pinch the legs of those apparently ambitious of ousting them and themselves obtaining control of the machine.

Pointing in this direction, I wonderingly inquired of my respected relative what those busy people were about and who might they be.

"Boy," replied he, "yonder groups are the great men who devote themselves to regulating the body and preserving the life of the patient. See how perfectly they control every part by the currents they send along the wires. Unless this were done continually, the poor creature would instantly expire. How grateful to them he must feel, when in a conscious condition, for the untiring zeal and unremitting labors they so generously bestow upon him! Some of them generate more force than others in the cells under their care. Just observe that noble operator, Romanoff. He can send currents of greater strength than any of the others, but it requires much courage, for, to obtain the power, he has to use an acid so concentrated that he is in momentary peril of its explosion in his hands. Yet he braves this imminent risk that the sufferer may have the whole benefit of his invaluable services. Next him stands the youthful specialist, Hohenzollern, near his friend Hapsburg, both of whom control currents of great potency. Beyond them stand Professors Carnot and Freycinet at a powerful generator, trying to outdo the mighty Romanoff in the force of their current. Many less famous celebrities are engaged along the adjoining row."

"Who is that extremely stout, short old lady," said I, "on the opposite side of the battery, so complacently watching the coroneted operator?"

"She is called Victoria, and is carelessly observing Dr. Salisbury, who is unable to generate a current of high power because of that ancient party behind him with the axe in his hand so persistently chopping away at the doctor's heels while others are upsetting his acids and stealing his plates. It is believed that they are anxious to control the current, and adopt this method of keeping their rival uneasy and impotent."

"Who are those men in charge of the group of current generators at the other end of the machine?" I interrupted Publius by asking.

"They are the Columbian endowment professors, Blaine and Harrison. Their position is the object of much rivalry. See that burly individual tugging so lustily at their coat-tails with one hand, while with the other he combats another aspirant for the job."

"Why, there appears to be quite a lot of them squabbling amongst themselves, besides fighting as two factions for control of the current."

"True. But this deplorable weakness not only prevents them giving due consideration to the correct principles of the science they pretend to follow, but also from acquiring even its rudiments. Still, I guess the patient derives as much benefit from their unsteady efforts as from the others."

"It is unquestionable, I apprehend, that the currents are of immense good to the sufferer?"

"Certainly, my boy, who under heaven ever heard that fact disputed?"

"Does the patient adequately appreciate their value and importance in his organic economy?"

"Undoubtedly he appreciates, but not all the currents in the same degree. Sometimes he begs for a change of operators, which is generally allowed. Let us now take a glance at some of the celebrated specialists who have come to give their opinions on the 'case.'"

"You have expressed my wish exactly, dear uncle," said I; "yonder are two numerous and noisy groups, standing near the battery not far from the patient, whom I am anxious to hear diagnose the case, for amongst them I see many women, indeed more than men."

"Those, my boy, are most excellent people and very respectable. Nothing new-fangled or extreme about their methods of treatment. Just listen a moment to that venerable professor in the group nearest the machine, diagnosing the case according to the system of their school."

Professor Goodlord speaks: "As I was observing, this is a typical example of the hereditary degeneracy of the sufferer's whole stock. He was conceived amid the taint of the disease, and in its iniquitous venom was he born. What then can save him? Doomed ere his birth to destruction, he must surely die. Yet there remains one hope, one means of salvation. A worse fate hereafter he may escape, if he but partake in faith undoubting of this mighty physic (holding toward the sufferer an old and worm-eaten volume), a remedy which never fails." Then, turning to his friends; "The trouble, you will observe, my worthy colleagues, arises entirely from the patient's own neglect. He could have found the cure before the eleventh hour, had he sought it in humility and prayer. But now no relief in this world can he find. (The patient groans in anguish.) Brethren, for the cure of his immortal soul let us pray."

I had not time to question Publius about the apparent contradictory views of the patient's disease that the worthy man expressed, before a high-pitched voice was heard amidst the other group, which was really of the same class of practitioners as the last.

"The speaker," whispered my companion, "is Miss Witherd, M. D., L.L. D., P. W. C. T. U., etc., etc., an estimable and learned practitioner."

These are the words I heard: "The case before us is a terrible example of the ravages of the demon barleycorn, the blighting curse of civilization. To this single cause are due the multitudinous developments of the devastating disease now scourging the land. Its all-devouring greed is eating away both body and soul of this poor creature. His whole family have perished of it, and he is fast approaching the same end. While there may still be time, let him grasp the only remedy that can avail him in his distress. Let him take the pledge. (She turns to the operators and the rest around the battery, who are evidently too busy to heed her words.) How long will ye permit this noxious drug to be administered to the patient, who is literally dying of it? The evil spreads, and no medical skill, no antiseptic, can arrest its decomposing properties. You alone can stop and eradicate the mischief. Attach more wires and dispatch a current so potent into the body that the demon shall be utterly burnt up and destroyed forever. Heed not the sufferer's protests, who knows no better, but save him from himself. Again, poor sufferer, I offer you this soothing opiate. Take the pledge."

Publius here drew my attention to a group standing near the table and turned toward the battery in a supplicating attitude, addressing the operators. In their midst stood a person holding a big bottle, evidently a patent medicine.

"He," said my uncle, "is Dr. Bellower, the New Physician. Some set him down as a quack, while many have great faith in his medicine, the National Safe Cure, which is extensively advertised as the People's Remedy. It is a good old drug, I am told; was first brought into notice by an ancient sawbones named Plato, but many since his time have claimed it as a new discovery."

"Has Dr. Bellower been long in the profession?"

"O dear, no; he is quite inexperienced yet, but his Cure has attained wonderful popularity. You ask me how he dropped upon it, seeing that his medical attainments are so limited. Well, as you may have heard, he was a story-telling chap and got to know of a place named Kaweah and another called Sinaloa, at which places, besides a few others, the medicine was an article of every-day use, — in fact, one of the inhabitants' necessaries of life. Then he told about it in a tale with a title suggestive of a pillar of salt. It happened just at that time that never-fail, quick-curing remedies were in high demand; and consequently the medicine soon became the best known drug on the market. Such were the circumstances that induced him to become a physician."

"I notice a small group between these medicine-vendors and the reverend Goodlord's people, who are looking through an Eastern window, as if searching for the Dawn."

"They are the Blissful fraternity from the seminary Christi Socialistus."

"Let us hear what the young Dr. Bellower is saying about his National Safe Cure."

". . . . the disease from which the poor fellow suffers is entirely the result of an absence of firm and authoritative regulation and organization. You, who are cognizant of the existing state of the patient's organism, know how wild and chaotic are the relations between the various functions of his system. The waste of energy consequent on this state of affairs is appalling. The secretions, instead of being stored up equally all over the body, accumulate at a few points in dangerously large quantities, while at other places they are unable to form at all. To correct this, it will be necessary to introduce a system which will equalize the amount of energy expended throughout the body, each portion of the organism furnishing the same quantity and receiving equal nourishment in return. Waste of energy would altogether be avoided, because it is due at present to the irresponsible and uncontrolled action of distinct parts of the system, cells and groups of cells (of which the whole body is composed) not under proper restraint, neither understanding nor caring about their respective requirements. Thus the body in general suffers from the absence of harmony between its component parts. Now, just observe the currents which the patient receives from the great combination voltaic battery. A slight examination will show that they lack vigor, are too limited in their scope, and require extensive enlargement in order to afford the sufferer relief. Still, when one of the currents is properly directed to any particular function, it always proves a complete suc-

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"In abolishing rent and interest, the last vestige of old-time slavery, the Revolution abolishes at one stroke the sword of the executioner, the seat of the magistrate, the club of the policeman, the gauge of the cash-man, the erasing-knife of the department clerk, all those insignia of Politics, which young Liberty grinds beneath her heel."—PROUDHON.

☞ The appearance in the editorial column of articles over other signatures than the editor's initial indicates that the editor approves their central purpose and general tenor, though he does not hold himself responsible for every phrase or word. But the appearance in other parts of the paper of articles by the same or other writers by no means indicates that he disapproves them in any respect, such disposition of them being governed largely by motives of convenience.

Lack of space in this issue obliges me to omit a letter from Dr. Merlino, in which he states that he simply told the "Herald" reporter that Mr. Pentecost and I are neither Communists nor revolutionists; which is true enough. The reporter's blunder, however, is no worse than that which John Most constantly makes in his characterizations of me. Dr. Merlino also promises to send me an article in response to my offer of these columns for an exposition of his ideas.

French legislators, convinced, as it seems, of the futility of government attempts at increasing the birth-rate in France, are now turning their attention to the children that *are* born, and are trying to save *them* by legislation. To diminish the death-rate is now the cry, and very stringent laws have been enacted in pursuance of that desideratum. It is forbidden under severe penalties to give to infants under one year any form of solid food unless such be ordered by a legally licensed doctor. It is also forbidden to use any nursing bottle provided with a rubber tube. A commissioner has been authorized to report on the various measures whereby the conditions of transport of sucklings sent from Paris into the provinces could be improved. The report will be followed by appropriate legislation. Efforts are also being made to break up the system of baby-farming and to induce French mothers to nurse their own infants. Whether the government is prepared to go to the length of compelling mothers to nurse their infants, we are not in a position to state; but there is no difference in principle between this and the laws already enacted. Before long proposals for State nurseries and State care of children will doubtless be advanced, although State nurseries would of course cause an alarming increase in the death-rate. This is the characteristic way of governments; having by its own aggressions caused the low birth-rate which fills it with dismay, the French Government, instead of removing the causes of the disease now adopts a method which is certain to exacerbate it.

A Mighty Consultation.

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cess. This is sometimes dispated, but only by spiteful carping critics, whom I do not deign to notice. Now, by a plentiful supply of the great medicine I at this moment hold in my hand, skilfully applied to the machine, the currents at once become possessed of most remarkable properties and curative powers. They would regulate each function of the organism and co-ordinate the vital forces in every part. They would prevent a monopoly or accumulation of secretions at certain points by undertaking a more equitable distribution of the products of energy and maintaining an equal supply of nourishment to every component cell. The battery operators would doubtless rapidly acquire and beget the necessary skill in the use of the remedy, so that all the benefits accruing from its application would at once be gained. In any case it would soon prove a self-acting cure. All the ills to which the patient is liable, be they coughs, colds, consumption, or catarrh, bad liver, pneumonia, indigestion, or the grip, will be instantly cured by a course of this medicine, the only perfect remedy."

"As this medicine, you tell me, is not new, do you know of any instances where its efficacy has been put to the test?" I queried.

"A great many instances, my dear boy," returned my consanguinal friend. "Why, a concoction containing most of the same ingredients has been in use in every municipality in the land, but I never heard of a cure. Besides, the Navy yards, Postal and Statistical departments, as well as many other branches of the public service, have imbibed the drug in liberal potations; yet they are said to grow more infirm and their flesh more corrupt the deeper they indulge. . . ."

At this point Publius was interrupted by the emergence from an obscure corner of the chamber of a dejected and helpless-looking set of individuals who proved to be a deputation of the patient's relatives, coming to implore a change of treatment at the hands of the practitioners in charge of the case. Picking their way carefully through the groups upon the floor, they reach the battery. Here they cast wistful eyes amongst the spectators, hoping to catch a sympathetic look. At last they see the ancient party with the axe cease chopping to look benignantly upon them, a smile of condescension overspreading his face. They appear to recognize him as a friend, and soon are at his side. He listens with much show of sympathy to the recital of their grievances; then answers them as follows:

"It is with the utmost gratification that I accept this overwhelming mark of your confidence, affection, and esteem. The great party — faculty, I mean — in whose name I speak will appreciate no less than myself the significance of the honor thus tendered, and in its hour of triumph will not fail to remember. The vast and all-embracing importance of the questions you raise in connection with the delicate topic of the relations between secretions and energy we all fully recognize. And although it has long occupied our earnest attention, and we hope soon to give the whole subject the most careful consideration, yet I approach it with the utmost diffidence, and feel utterly incapable at this moment, from want of sufficient data and in the absence of material facts and essential arguments, which will doubtless be forthcoming from both parties to the issues, of giving expression to any authoritative pronouncement. But I may venture to say one thing, in which you will have no difficulty in concurring, that the true interests of secretions and of energy are identical, and that one cannot be benefited unless the other has also an advantage. And that whatever exactions or demands the one may make upon the other, perhaps rashly, heedlessly, and without adequate thought, will, if conceded, be in the long run injurious to the demanding party, unless it is in the interest of the other to grant such concessions, exactions, and requests. The particular points you interrogate me upon, such as the more equitable division of profits between secretions and energy, the better diffusion of the advantages accruing to secretions alone when highly concentrated, as the tendency now is, the unduly large amount of energy which the patient must expend to produce results so small in proportion, the advisability of shortening that period of daily energy, are unfortunately just those topics which I have hitherto been almost wholly debarred from giving that close study and attention essential to a lucid and comprehensive understanding. I have been much pre-occupied in other fields of thought, as, for example, the origin of the mythological element in ancient Greek tragedy, the authenticity of Genesis, and more recently the subject of Hibernian autonomy. But you may accept, nevertheless, my deepest sympathy in your praiseworthy endeavor to mitigate the more virulent features of the poor creature's malady; and also my most solemn assurance that, when I am free from the burden of my other absorbing labors, I shall make at least a sporadic attempt to become acquainted with the subject you are so deeply interested in. No words of mine can picture with vividness sufficient the evil results upon the poor sufferer of the conservatively ignorant and hopelessly incompetent manner of treatment pursued by the flippant Salisbury. And above all things I trust you will, on the first opportunity, see the propriety and necessity of placing in my hands the future well-being of your relative, the patient; indeed, I leave that matter to your good-will with the certitude of perfect confidence."

This tersely-worded and definite promise of the world-famous Professor not only gave the utmost satisfaction to the sufferer's appealing friends, but even the patient himself, in his feeble way, displayed unmistakable evidence of his appreciation and gratitude.

The deputation now moves towards an expert of almost equal reputation. After they have briefly explained the object of their mission, he propounds in an elaborate lecture the remedial measures which, according to his diagnosis, the case requires. Being unable to comprehend the full drift of this exposition because of my natural obtuseness in such weighty matters, I thus interrogate my uncle:

"Who is yon erudite and polished professor?"

"My dear boy, your acquaintance with the leaders of our noble profession is indeed limited. He is the most popular man amongst the whole Columbian Faculty. The scientific invention which he claims as his own is commonly called Reciprocity. We might explain that novel proposal by an old Scottish phrase, "truck for troak," signifying a reciprocal exchange of advantages or services. To understand how it is applied, you should know that Professor Blaine, like his colleagues, would cure the patient from all existing ailments, as well as Protect him against possible maladies, by a drastic restriction upon the interchange of accumulated energy between the different members of the body. Each part, they contend, should perform all its functions by its own inherent energy without co-operation with other portions of the organism. Mutual interchange of the products of energy and secretions they consider a deplorable evil, creating and fostering disease, reducing the tone and healthiness of the system, and dereriorating the value of the energy suspended. The remedy lies in a thorough system of Protection, which, you may observe, they now apply by means of their currents to the sufferer's body. That rival of theirs, Grover, is burning to obtain control and change the medicine, but. . . ."

I felt obliged to stop the old fellow here in his elucidations to inquire the name of the specialist whom the deputation had now reached.

"D'ye mean that party standing behind the cell operated by the gallant young Hohenzollern, at whom he makes grimaces and menaces occasionally?"

"The same," I rejoined.

"His name is Herr Babble, and he is a great babbler too in a medical council called the Reichstag. He has been the favored recipient of high rewards from the governing body of his university. They have in days gone by provided him with lodgings and every necessary, free of all expense to himself. Let us hear him speak."

"I am keenly alive," said the expert, "to this mark of your regard, and shall continue to endeavor to retain your confidence by unremitting labor for the patient's welfare. If I could only obtain control of the machine now engineered by that presumptive young man, the change for the better in the health of the patient would be almost instantaneous. The poor fellow needs only a scientific method of control in order to bring about a complete recovery. The system must be thoroughly reorganized, the functions of each part properly defined and regulated, and all inequalities in the distribution of secretions and the expenditure of energy removed by a firm and vigorous application of battery power. Such an arrangement as I, if given control of the machine, would speedily develop. I would loyally adhere to the method of treatment laid down by our teacher, the renowned physician, Karl Marx. Let the sufferer submit himself to this course recommended and prescribed by an authority so high, and the last vestige of the maladies that now afflict him with such tenacity will be forever eliminated."

An old man, Bismarck by name, away in the rear of the speaker and quite unnoticed, then muttered below his breath: "Fudge! haven't I myself before now experimented with this medicine a little upon the patient, actually filching some of that fellow's nostrums for the purpose? But luckily I took good care to prevent *him* vending his wares and foisting such vile drugs upon an ignorant and unruly public. That was before I retired, for he is now pursuing the same dangerous traffic, although it is universally known that the supposed remedies, which I had borrowed and applied, are proved to be a ludicrous and miserable failure. Oh! if I were just at that battery now, wouldn't I stop the Babbling quack? My late master seems even to believe in some of his drugs."

The young Hohenzollern must have overheard these remarks, for he turned round and shook his fist at the old man, and told him to shut up his whine, as he himself meant to try some further experiments with the medicine. By this time the deputation had reached him and began to lay their grievances before him. He then got into a towering rage, and said:

"You incur my unqualified displeasure in talking to that dangerous impostor, Babble. He is a Socialist quack, and will fill your head with false and impossible ideas about the patient's rights, lead you all to ruin, and uproot the affection and respect for the properly and divinely-constituted practitioners which from time immemorial you have so wisely borne them. How degenerate, disloyal, and discontented are the times fallen! Ah me! for the vanishing privileges and prestige of my honorable Profession ——. Good folks, mark well these words of warning. The current I command is very potent, and gives me complete control of the patient. If you promise on his behalf to go no more near these babbling knaves, whose medicines will only set the sufferer's blood into an unhealthy agitation, leading to all manner of disorder, nor listen

to their speech, I shall be pleased to exert myself in his behalf; but, if this wholesome advice be disregarded,—remember that my current is of great force,—I will burn him up and pulverize him to ashes. You may go."

The delegates retired in fear and trembling.

Uncle Publius just then spotted an old acquaintance, who had come in and begun to examine the patient.

"Singletax George," he explained, "was once a pal of mine. Away back in the gold-field days, when he was not so well known as he is now. But one day he found a great work that had been dropped by a Dove and laid forgotten till he picked it up, but he claimed for himself the discoveries that it told of, and published the book for the benefit of the common people. Thus it came to pass that his fame was spread far and wide. For many had great faith in the wonderful medicine because of its simplicity. It was just one single pill—but, bless me! the eminent doctor is about to diagnose our patient."

"There is," he was saying, "a tremendous waste going on in the patient's system, which increases faster and faster every year. It is caused by a monopoly in the natural resources of the body. Without access to the raw material, out of which the organism is built up and sustained, the patient cannot live. Any limitation or restriction upon the natural sources of food supply inevitably occasions bad health and disease. Now, it is patent to the dullest intelligence that to this artificial monopoly is due the present sufferings of the unfortunate creature. He is deprived of the essential means of health. Free access to the natural opportunities which allow a healthy existence is therefore the object to be secured. Fortunately for the poor creature, I have discovered a medicine which, when taken, will effect his complete recovery. Consisting as it does of a single pill, which is both harmless and easily taken, no remedy could be simpler. The sustenance which should go to build up a healthy body is devoured by a horde of parasites, who continually prey upon the sufferer. Although the robbery is systematic, it is carried on unequally throughout the various parts. To stop the monopoly and prevent the drain from the patient which now flows to the lazy parasites the currents from the battery alone can avail. The operators can so manipulate them by diverting them from every other purpose and confining them upon this single object that the parasitic supply will be cut off and the share now required for their support be justly and equitably distributed to every part of the organism. None can deny that the electric machine is specially suited for this work, and can be adapted by the operators to eliminate the unhealthy bacilli and maintain a free and open source of supply. A pill which will accomplish such wonders is the remedy I offer. Health and vigor free from all imperfection will follow as day follows night its application. Thus would I cure the sufferer."

He thereupon went up to the big rival of the Columbian operators, and began to demonstrate the efficacy of his nostrum.

We suddenly became aware of a great commotion at the entrance to the theatre, accompanied by the sounds of a big drum, a tambourine, and the strains of a cornet in that discordant key peculiar to the itinerant player in a back street late at night.

"Here comes Surgeon-general Booth of the universal army," cried my expositor, as a venerable personage of Hebraic cast of features marched up to the table and proceeded to examine the patient. When this is accomplished, he commands the musicians to sound the *reveille*, which they attempt. But the effort seems more like a combination of "John Brown's Body" and "Yankee Doodle" with a few chords of the "New Jerusalem" thrown in. The Surgeon-general then addresses all present.

"This disease I have carefully measured, and in the balance I have weighed it. The result is startlingly worse than my gloomiest anticipations. No less than a tenth of the whole body I find overrun and submerged by this appalling malady. And the annual rate of increase is very great, for it spreads with dangerous rapidity. The question to be solved is not so much how it is caused and where in the organic mechanism it originates, but simply what means shall be adopted to counteract its ravages and, if possible, prevent it spreading any further. I have here a medicine of my own concoction (I have been told that certain cantankerous persons, some of them lately attached to my staff, who are jealous of the honor its invention has brought me, impudently claim the remedy as their discovery) which is designed not to effect the unnecessary work of eradicating the germs of the disease, but solely to get rid of the consequences of their presence."

The Surgeon is here interrupted by the vociferous applause of a number of bishops, earls, and other wealthy admirers.

"This medicine," he continues, "will at present perhaps appear somewhat costly, but I promise you that in the long run it will prove most economical. I shall begin to administer it as soon as the trifling few millions which are needful to make the start have been subscribed."

He now passes round the hat amongst his admirers and the general public, which quickly returns well filled with coin.

Then resuming: "The ingredients of the remedy are old and well tried. There is nothing new or revolutionary about any of them (loud applause from the subscribers). It is true they have not proved very efficacious as heretofore made use of, but the manner in which I shall combine them will produce a miraculous transformation. One of the ingredients entering into the compound has been used for generations under the English Poor Laws, another is a household remedy in every prison in the land, a third is the outcome of the investigations of numerous Charity Organizations, while yet another is the discovery of the Colonization Society, and last, though not least, are the well-known preparations of Dr. Hyndman of the Social Democratic Federation for the relief of the unemployed by means of municipal stone-yards, wood-chopping, and other forms of applied energy. Such a combination of tested and drastic drugs will prove a medicine that must sweep all before it. The skilful pharmacist and Reviewer of Reviews, W. T. Stead, has mixed and bottled the preparation, which can be obtained on any second-hand bookstall for a few cents. Please pass round the hat once more."

The musicians again struck up their inspiriting medley.

Turning to Publius, I was surprised to find that he had gone off, but I was not long in finding him in an opposite corner, talking to an old acquaintance, whom he introduced as Professor Co-operator English. He also was a physician of eminence, I learnt, and had been using for the patient's peculiar ailment a remedy for no less than a couple of generations with more or less success. On further inquiry, he told us that it was used only in the mildest forms of the disease, and even then afforded but partial relief; that in their method of applying it the more virulent stages of the complaint were never acted upon; and in fact it was used only when least required, which probably accounted for its apparent success.

We returned to our seats. A woman of impressive appearance, whose hair was quite gray, although she seemed still young, began to speak with a degree of eloquence equalled only by her transparent earnestness.

"This must be the soul-wandering Besantavatsky," observed my uncle.

She began: "The sufferer's pitiable condition has been my whole life's study. His welfare, both in this life and in that beyond the metempsychosis which we ignorantly misname death, absorbs my undivided thoughts. Numerous and diverse have been the Schools of medical science and pseudo-science through which I have wandered, searching for the true and only cure. At each stage, as I tarried to imbibe the lore that was taught, I cried: 'Now have I found the secret,' only to discover, after trying to make a skeptical world believe as I did, that the hidden truth was still beyond my grasp. At last from the ancient hills of the Orient in the cradle of humanity, from the wise Mahatmas of Thibet, was wafted to my weary, waiting soul the true light, the grand secret that brings salvation to the patient; by which every sufferer in all times is raised up whole and perfect. In days gone by I was subject to the rays of a bright and forceful luminant and believed that all his sufferings arose from excessive fecundity, a multiplicity of offspring which tended ever to outrun its possible means of life. A mistaken notion I have since that time recalled as a kind of Malthusian nightmare. So intensely did I hold that absurd idea then that I spent years and years of the best part of my life in promulgating far and wide a preventative remedy. For this action I was made to suffer in character and reputation. Yet I was prompted to that cause by motives which were the highest. Let it pass. From that stage I gravitated, after receding beyond the influence of the great magnetic light, toward one lesser luminary, then another and another, chameleon-like, changing color with the passing shades of light and experiencing a corresponding change of theory and method of treatment with every phase. (Behind the speaker is a bust of the late Chas. Bradlaugh, which seems to droop its head and heave a deep sigh). Finally dawned upon me the Theosophic Sun bursting in resplendent brilliance and lighting me into the path of eternal and unerring psychic science. To the mighty influence of my late guide, teacher, and friend, the noble prophetess of the Materio-spiritual religion, the grandest of the daughters who in visible form have ever trod the earth, who in her present state, though invisible to common eyes, still remains my counsellor, materialized to my senses,—to her I give the honor of making known to my latent sensory faculties the vast unknown—now not unknowable—the ethereal realms of Karma. All this must I teach the patient that he may achieve his own salvation and eventual immortality."

The vigilant Publius now draws my attention to an old man just entering the theatre unnoticed, clad in the homely garb of a muscovite moujik, whose austere look reminded one of a mediæval anchorite. "Here," said Publius, "comes the Alchemist who believes he has found the philosopher's stone. He begins to speak. Hear him."

"All is vanity and vexation of spirit, saith a satiated noble. Toil and poverty are the true conditions of health. All others have I tried and found wanting. The pomp of kings, the excitement of war, the allurements of beautiful women, the exhilaration of the wine-cup, the amusements of the drama, the forgetfulness of literature,—through all these have I passed and found no relief. Amongst the weary, laden masses, down amid the struggle and strife of the lowly peasant, the sordid, brutal, ignorant, famishing, toil-worn son of the earth, with him alone can a burdened soul find peace. But this only is not enough. Woman, even a man's wife, must be eschewed; every form of pleasure avoided. Patience of spirit and faith in God alone be cherished."

After this prelude, he turns to the patient and then goes on:

"That these currents which I see ramifying through every part of the sufferer's body are a sore affliction and the cause of much misery I have long since discovered. But the great Physician hath commanded, 'Resist not evil;' I therefore adjure the sufferer neither to cry out nor rebel when the currents cause his limbs to twitch with pain and his body to writhe with anguish. Assuredly the battery and its manipulators are responsible for the worst features of the disease; but religion and faith teil him to endure in patience, humility, and with Christian resignation."

Long did he discourse on these and other points, setting forth the manner in which the sufferer is bled till chronic anemia is the result, showing how the innumerable parasites, assisted largely by the currents, unceasingly suck the life blood of the helpless patient, and pointing out many novel remedies. The mystic then went off in search of the famine-stricken relatives of the sufferer to lavish his skill, his time, and his wealth upon them, thus endeavoring to ease their burdens heavy and sore.

"What a noble, self-sacrificing old man!" I exclaimed.

"A grand and loving character," answered Publius, "but you mustn't accept his diagnosis rashly; for almost every year he finds out a different origin of the malady and accordingly a fresh cure prescribes. In the ideas he possesses upon the vital question of the science of social health he remains at once two thousand years behind his time and one thousand perhaps in advance of it."

"Who is he now occupied upon the case?" I queried.

"He," said my friend, "is a brilliant student, of noble sentiments, full of good intentions. One thing you may be sure of: he means well. With each of the scientific schools he has passed a probation; and every new system he takes up he believes in and advocates with as much fervor as if it afforded (as it then does to him) a perfect explanation of every symptom of the disease and a remedy infallible. His theories and ideas are, however, away in the Twentieth Century, so we need not at this time pursue them much farther."

"He appears to have an aversion to the battery arrangement quite as intense as the ancient alchemist expressed," said I, "and indeed he follows closely in many respects upon his lines, both in diagnosing the case and in his non-resistance advice to the patient."

"You rightly apprehend, my boy, so far as I can judge the meaning of the discourse. Did you catch that point, a remedial measure I take it, about occupying or setting free all vacant natural resources?"

"Yes, he believes it to be a principle in restoratives both urgent and essential. But here comes a new arrival, a smart and academical-looking young man."

"Ah, yes, he's the celebrated Dr. Fabius of London."

After a searching and exhaustive examination of the case, which he conducted in the most approved scientific manner, the learned Fabius began:

"The evolution of industrial energy which for a great length of time has been proceeding throughout the organism of the sufferer has revolutionized the whole system of producing nourishment and secretions. While the power of energy to create supplies has multiplied enormously, yet it has made no advance toward the control of their distribution. This has led to the growth of a parasitic class, who not only absorb the functions of distribution,—mostly amongst themselves,—but have accumulated for their own profit a gigantic mass of secretions whose concentration goes on with alarming rapidity. A complete fusion of the various secretionary interests is taking place, and unless the patient, or rather the operators in his name, assume control of these accumulations in trust, the whole system will be entirely at the mercy of the parasites. By the patient, through the battery, taking over these accumulated products of energy, he can control and regulate all the functions of production and distribution, and thus consummate the evolutionary process so long in progress. In place of the discord and friction now manifested in every portion of the system, which has arisen out of the inevitable conflict of the new productive methods with old habits and an unreformed mode of distribution and organization, we must substitute an all-embracing, harmonious, and scientific system of industrial organization. The new system will in the main centralize, but in many parts localize, the management of industrial energy and reproductive secretions. All unearned increments will be distributed equitably to the cells of which the body is composed. The rent of ability will be the only advantage that can possibly accrue to one cellule over another. But that will act as a valuable incentive to extra exertion and prove beneficial to all. Such a method of treatment is indorsed and prescribed by some of the most eminent authorities upon this disease. And the present conditions abound in concrete examples of its successful application. I might refer you to the transactions of every legislative hospital for precedents and illustrations. The patient's nervous system or intelligence department—a perfect Post Office in its way—has long been worked by the battery operators. It is a very complicated and highly-organized mechanism. And who is there that would question the ability of the battery currents or their operators who manipulate the department with the strictest economy and the most perfect results? Consider the multiplicity of regulations now in force to limit the undue exercise of energy, especially of

females and the young, and how beneficial is their action upon the poor helpless creatures. Then there are the numerous examples of the operation of organized energy by municipalities, in gas works, etc., to say nothing of the industries carried on in hospitals for offenders and in workhouses. In fact, gentlemen, we could point to no end of examples of the existence today of Socialistic methods in the treatment of this complaint."

At this juncture a man, whose name was said to be Hyndman, a rival practitioner of the speaker and who reminded us of a compromise between an out-of-work parson and a bankrupt stockbroker, standing amidst a knot of idlers, exclaimed: "Let us relieve the patient by organizing a demonstration of the unemployed to demand work from the battery operators."

"You've played that game out long ago," replied one of his friends, and then the learned doctor resumed:

"Our method of treatment is so simple that a child could apply it. You have only got to drop bits of paper at certain specified times into ballot-boxes, while we and other of your well-wishers rub in an application called 'lobbying;' and lo! the great transformation is accomplished. The patient is cured."

As Dr. Fabius finished, up sprang a jovial old chap, whose head was covered with an unruly, go-as-you-please mass of gray locks, his countenance "beaming kindly unto all the earth" (the ideal personification of good-natured love of mankind), and thereupon offered to correct the Fabian diagnosis.

Says he: "Your concrete examples are an historical delusion seen through the rose-tinted glass of imagination. The results of the operation of your medicine have proved conclusively its inadequacy. Why, any unbiased person can see that nothing in this world yet undertaken by that stupid set of operators but has turned out a corrupt and bungling piece of botchwork. Such interference will ever entail waste and suffering untold. Better make a manure market of their power house than allow them to continue their irritating and disease-creating operations. As to the National Safe Cure of another quack of the same school as my friend Fabius, have I not sufficiently exposed its uselessness and folly in my report from 'Nowhere' in which 'News' I have told of the only perfect system that will cure the patient by means of an absolute and unconditional equality of condition. A state in which the battery operators and their vile currents will no longer be tolerated. Each component cellule of the organism will then be free and equal to every other through a community of energy, nourishment, and all natural and acquired advantages. This condition the patient must attain if he is to enjoy perfect health, and maintain even should the use of force be required. Indeed, I see little possibility of ever reaching such a state without the most strenuous exertion and uncompromising coercive persuasion. The only result of the treatment prescribed by Doctors Fabius, Bellower, and others would be a condition of the sufferer's body which I might term regimentation, a military order of liberty according to rule, discipline, and command; such a result I, as an artist, a poet, an individuality, a man, protest and rebel against and am determined to combat to my latest breath."

The enthusiastic professor was succeeded by an illustrious supporter, who was even more pronounced in his opposition to the regimentation system of treatment and in support of the methods of the last exponent. "The French Revolution," said Prince Pierre, "brought into prominence a number of scientific truths which it has taken the whole of the present century to mature and put in practice. But it has been found that those discoveries, while useful and necessary in their time and place, represent only a part—a transitory stage—of the principles of the science that absorbs our attention, and that the period has arrived for a wider conception and more specific application of the three leading ideas of that fruitful period. Complete autonomy of every organic group must now be the watchword. Away with all interference from without. Let the forces at work in the body have free play, liberated from external influence, and they will, through inherent spontaneity, evolve a state of perfect health. No more batteries, no more ignorant operators, but a free and spontaneous grouping and correlation of the functions of the system must be allowed to take place. The change must be subject to a great principle, which is essential to unimpaired health and vigor. That principle is the community of economic forces and products throughout the whole body. To put it in force and uphold it no recourse to coercive methods, however violent, would I deem too great. Its application in this case is the primary condition of the cure."

In answer to my usual inquisitorial remarks, Publius said: "The learned Pierre is a devoted student of science, whose words carry great weight. So high have certain rulers esteemed his talents and erudition that they have loaded him with rewards. Indeed, they have literally thrust upon him their marks of favor and esteem. At the expense of the government he was maintained at the hospital fortress of St. Peter and St. Paul that he might devote himself entirely to the study of his own reflections. He might still be pursuing those profitable subjects but that an overpowering desire to see the world and to travel beyond the hospital led him to throw up the great honor. Again, the Government of the French Republic, noted for its noble treatment of distinguished scientific agitators, offered him its hospitality, and for four years entertained him without charge. No higher tribute than this could be paid to any man. But look yonder. Here comes a professor who has enjoyed even higher marks of distinction than Prince Pierre. This is the world-renowned Dr. John Dynamost. At the present time he is the honored guest of our own sovereign people, while the autocratic Kaiser and the Constitutional authorities of England have each in turn bestowed upon him their kind attentions."

Dr. John Dynamost diagnoses the case and explains his remedy: "You have already heard professors of almost every known system display their ingenuity in formulating remedies for this case. Allopaths, hydropaths, faith-healers, humbugs, and quacks of every description have tried their skill. Nobody, however, has spoken of the greatest discovery in medical science, the homœopathic system of the German, Hahnemann. I shall supply the omission by giving a brief and pointed description of that beautiful method, the triumph of chemistry. Its chief characteristics are simplicity, directness, and rapidity in results. That 'like cures like' is its central idea. In other words, that which causes a disease when taken in large quantities will cure the same complaint if applied in minute doses. Let us now consider the nature of the patient's malady. As you have already heard from two experts who immediately preceded me in this investigation, the great source of his sufferings lies in the currents which destroy the naturally healthy condition of the organism. Through their medium the rascally operators have sapped the sufferer's vitality to the very marrow of his bones. It is clear enough that the battery is not operated by the desire of the patient nor in accordance with his will. The terrible disease, born of the accursed currents and their operators, has been so long gnawing his vitals that he has lost all recollection of a time when such vermin had no existence. It has not yet permeated his dull comprehension to perceive that their villainous currents are the invariable cause of all the ills his poor flesh is afflicted with,—the source of paralysis, consumption, anaemia, nervous debility, and general decay from which he continuously suffers. Although he has grown accustomed to it and has long since ceased to apprehend the mischief, yet it is as clear as sunlight that FORCE is the origin of all his misery. By the use of force this devastating battery is operated upon him. By force the operators send the currents through his diseased and helpless body. By force his present cramped, slavish, and rule-ridden condition is maintained. And by force alone is the suffering patient prevented from becoming a whole and healthy man. Diagnosing then in accordance with the beautiful privileges of homœopathy, we at once discover the remedy. Nothing could be simpler; a cure in perfect harmony with the central idea of our noble system. FORCE produces the disease. *Force* cures it. We have but to supply a few pills containing an attenuated attrition of the drug or active principle which has created the malady, let the patient take and apply them, and behold the dread disease lives no more. It is blown away, asphyxiated, decomposed, assassinated, shattered into atoms, projected throughout the winds of heaven, completely eradicated, and forever destroyed. Yes, gentlemen, such is the efficacy of my unrivalled remedy. I intend to manufacture a goodly supply of the pills and put them up in a portable form ready for immediate application, so that the most unskilled, most oppressed sufferers in the world can use them with impunity, safety, and certainty of result. Already I have compiled a treatise giving all necessary instructions for their manufacture and full directions for their concoction, so that everybody can obtain them and have them by when required. When properly handled, they will prove, for scattering all obstructions and revolutionizing the system, a perfect bomb."

An unobtrusive individual, apparently assuming the *rôle* of a scientific philosopher, now casts his shadow across the scene.

"Here comes Proudhon Redivivus," cries my garrulous friend, as the new-comer approached the case. "He is a stranger to the Faculty. Scarcely one in the whole profession recognizes him. You see he disputes the methods of every one of the professors; they in turn ignore or despise him. He speaks."

"My dear professional friends," began the student—he seemed no more,—"to a truthful understanding of the case before us it is absolutely essential to have an accurate, careful, and comprehensive knowledge of the physiological structure and economic functions of the organism. First causes must be traced out, sentiment, prejudice, and passion eliminated throughout the inquiry, a solid foundation laid for permitting the growth and development of the necessary conditions of industrial and economic equity. Despite all the fakir-like puffery of simple cures, perfect pills, and remedies infallible, I feel obliged to declare their utter inadequacy and futility; to affirm that the patient's ailments are neither simple nor easy to diagnose, but of the most complicated character that could be imagined. From generation to generation have these germs been transmitted. As soon as one form of disease was shaken off, another more tenacious has taken root. So interlinked are the causes and so far back do they originate that to most people a cure may well seem impossible. Yet victory is for the valiant; courage and determination at last win success. So that I have every hope and an unshaken faith in the sufferer's ultimate recovery. Painful and slow must the road prove that leads thither. No violent aperients, no lightning drugs or alleviating but deadening opiates, can assist him in the slightest, but will certainly retard his return to perfect health. Let the sick man, first of all, understand the perilous gravity of his condition. For it is him alone and no outsider, however eminent and skilful, that will effect the cure. Without his conscious and continuous efforts no improvement is possible, but the sooner he disconnects his person from the currents the faster will the period of convalescence arrive. Any careful observer can see that the body remains in a condition artificial and unhealthy owing to the pernicious interference of the currents arising from the controlling power of the operators. It will be admitted that they assume some functions in themselves useful and necessary to the patient's welfare. But every such service could be much safer and more efficiently performed by the unrestricted play of organic forces inherent in the system than it is possible for the ignorant and presumptuous operators to effect. This can easily be demonstrated from our every-day experience. Let us return for a moment to some of the remedies proposed by the learned gentlemen who have spoken. Take the last cure offered the sufferer. The homœopathic pill of concentrated albeit attenuated FORCE. An excellent medicine, perhaps, when it can be used with curative effect, as when the body is bound hand and foot, the nervous system paralyzed, and the brain rendered inoperative,—where every natural function is stopped, cut off, and corked up. There it may prove the only pill which the sufferer could take. But under other conditions, where less drastic but more effective medicines can be freely applied, its efficacy as a certain cure is extremely doubtful. So long as free access to the cerebral regions and nervous structure is kept open, any remedy applied to other portions and ignoring those vital parts is reactionary, merely a variation of the battery arrangement. As for the compulsory communalization appliances of Prince Pierre and others, they are but the tinctures instead of the sugar pills of the same specific. The primary truth of biological science that the whole body is but the result of a multiplication of organic units or cells, each with its own separate existence, is too often ignored; that in a free condition each unit and group of cells contains its own peculiar functions and characteristics from the beginning, though in a latent state, which develop for the good of the whole organism through unrestricted liberty and produce a perfect and healthy body. We should direct our efforts, therefore, not from without but from within the system. Look at the blood, and mark its importance in the patient's economy. It is the medium of exchange between all parts of the organism. Through its action the division of labor and differentiation of functions, the complexity of which render the subject of this inquiry so highly developed, so sensitive, so transcendent, so full of the highest possibilities, alone are possible. When this medium of exchange is restricted, limited in quantity and in kind, prevented by any means from performing all the work required of it, the exchange of energy and vitality between the various parts is impeded, stagnation and suffering become chronic, and the whole body deteriorates. It is true that some of the learned professors, indeed nearly all of them, quietly ignore the value and purpose of the blood as an essential factor in the patient's system. They would fain get along without it, discard it altogether, or, like the less modern leeches, drain it off and lessen the quantity at every symptom of disease. This subject needs to be reconsidered, and notions in closer harmony with scientific facts and principles must be adopted by the profession. I have no specific. Nor could such effect what it would pretend to do if I had it. The principles of health I might go on expounding indefinitely, but until the subject himself begins to realize their truth and apply them in good earnest my words must be as chaff blown where the wind listeth. For the present, my most wise compatriots, I shall bid you Adieu."

At the conclusion of this lengthy dissertation I turned to the old boy to hear his opinion, but, to his shame I must tell it, he was soundly sleeping. I was at last worked up to a terrific state of mental excitement. I heeded my wise expositor no more, but let him sleep on. For I felt that, after listening to so many and diverse views and remedies, it was high time for me to come forward with my own great discovery. I would put them all to the blush, drive them to hide their diminished heads before the brilliancy of my infallible prescription. It was a family secret, but I was the last survivor of the race that held the wonderful nostrum. Down with a rush headlong till the floor was reached, and I stood at the sufferer's couch. Then arose a din and a scramble, for everybody had found a new explanation and all began to proclaim it at once. I could bear this no longer. With one dash I was through the door, along the cold, gloomy corridors, and in the street. My arm was growing more painful, my body more chilly. A shiver went through my bones.

I awoke. The fire in the stove had burnt out. The lamp emitted a murky yellow light. The volumes before me reminded me of the economic problems with which I had been wrestling. The pins and needles seemed dancing in fiendish glee through the arm which had pillowed my head. The air had cooled to a score or more degrees below freezing. I felt that the time had come to seek a more congenial place of repose.

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